
Draft
Archaeological Inventory Survey Report
For the City Center (Section 4) of the
Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project,
Kalihi, Kapālama, Honolulu, and Waikīkī Ahupua‘a,
Honolulu (Kona) District, Island of O‘ahu
TMK [1] 1-2, 1-5, 1-7, 2-1, 2-3 (Various Plats and Parcels)

Volume VIA

GPR Results:

Zone 1 West Kalihi (Test Excavations 1 to 20A)

Zone 2 East Kalihi Test Excavations 21 to 47)

Zone 3 West Kapālama (Test Excavations 48 to 53)

Zone 4 East Kapālama (Test Excavations 54 to 84)

Zone 5 Iwilei (Test Excavations 85 to 95)

Zone 6 Waterfront (Test Excavations 96 to 115)

Prepared for

The City and County of Honolulu

and

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Table of Contents

Section 1 Background	1
Section 2 Field Methods.....	2
2.1 GPR Technology and Limitations	2
2.2 Survey Methodology	4
2.3 Data Collection Param.....	6
2.4 Post-processing	6
2.5 Ground-truthing	7
Section 3 Interpretation and Results	9
3.1 Slice Map Analysis	9
3.2 Profile Analysis	10
3.2.1 Discrete Objects.....	10
3.2.2 Human Burials	11
3.2.3 Sediments.....	13
3.2.4 Stratigraphy.....	15
3.3 Excavated profile and GPR Profile Visual Comparison.....	15
Section 4 Summary	17
Section 5 GPR Human Remains Report	19
5.1 Test Excavation 096	19
5.1.1 Excavation Results.....	19
5.1.2 GPR Interpretation.....	19
5.2 Test Excavation 141	22
5.2.1 Excavation Results.....	22
5.2.2 GPR Interpretation.....	22
5.3 Test Excavation 142	25
5.3.1 Excavation Results.....	25
5.3.2 GPR Interpretation.....	25
5.4 Test Excavation 150	28
5.4.1 Excavation Results.....	28
5.4.2 GPR Interpretation.....	28
5.5 Test Excavation 170	31
5.5.1 Excavation Results.....	31
5.5.2 GPR Interpretation.....	31
5.6 Test Excavation 226C.....	34
5.6.1 Excavation Results.....	34
5.6.2 GPR Interpretation.....	35
5.7 Test Excavation 227A.....	38
5.7.1 Excavation Results.....	38
5.7.2 GPR Interpretation.....	38
Section 6 West Kalihi Geographic Zone (T-001 to T-020A)	41
6.1 Overall Location	41
6.2 Geography, Geology, and Land Forms.....	41
6.3 Modern Land Use and Built Environment.....	42

6.4 GPR Sediment Summery	42
Test Excavation 1	45
Test Excavation 2	47
Test Excavation 4	49
Test Excavation 5	51
Test Excavation 6	53
Test Excavation 7	55
Test Excavation 8	57
Test Excavation 9	59
Test Excavation 10	61
Test Excavation 12	65
Test Excavation 14	69
Test Excavation 15	71
Test Excavation 16	73
Test Excavation 17	75
Test Excavation 18	77
Test Excavation 19	79
Test Excavation 20	81
Test Excavation 20A.....	83
Section 7 East Kalihi Geographic Zone (T-021 to T-047)	85
7.1 Overall Location	85
7.2 Geography, Geology, and Land Forms.....	85
7.3 Modern Land Use and Built Environment.....	86
7.4 GPR Sediment Summery	86
Test Excavation 21	90
Test Excavation 22	92
Test Excavation 23	94
Test Excavation 24	96
Test Excavation 25	98
Test Excavation 26	100
Test Excavation 27	102
Test Excavation 31	110
Test Excavation 32	112
Test Excavation 34	116
Test Excavation 35	118
Test Excavation 36	120
Test Excavation 37	122
Test Excavation 39	126
Test Excavation 40	128
Test Excavation 41	130
Test Excavation 42	132
Test Excavation 47	142
Section 8 West Kapālama Geographic Zone (T-048 to T-053)	144
8.1 Overall Location	144
8.2 Geography, Geology, and Land Forms.....	144
8.3 Modern Land Use and Built Environment.....	145
8.4 GPR Sediment Summary	145

Test Excavation 48	148
Test Excavation 49	150
Test Excavation 51	154
Test Excavation 52	156
Test Excavation 53	158
Section 9 East Kapālama Geographic Zone (T-054 to T-085)	160
9.1 Overall Location	160
9.2 Geography, Geology, and Land Forms.....	160
9.3 Modern Land Use and Built Environment.....	161
9.4 GPR Sediment Summary	161
Test Excavation 54	165
Test Excavation 56	167
Test Excavation 57	169
Test Excavation 58	171
Test Excavation 59	173
Test Excavation 62	179
Test Excavation 64	183
Test Excavation 65	185
Test Excavation 66	187
Test Excavation 67	189
Test Excavation 69	193
Test Excavation 70	195
Test Excavation 72	199
Test Excavation 73	201
Test Excavation 74	203
Test Excavation 75	205
Test Excavation 76	207
Test Excavation 77	209
Test Excavation 78	211
Test Excavation 79	213
Test Excavation 80	215
Test Excavation 81	217
Test Excavation 82	219
Test Excavation 83	221
Test Excavation 84	223
Section 10 Iwilei Geographic Zone (T-085 to T-095)	225
10.1 Overall Location	225
10.2 Geography, Geology, and Land Forms.....	225
10.3 Modern Land Use and Built Environment.....	226
10.4 GPR Sediment Summary	226
Test Excavation 85	229
Test Excavation 86	231
Test Excavation 87	233
Test Excavation 89	237
Test Excavation 90	239
Test Excavation 91	241
Test Excavation 92	243

Test Excavation 93	245
Test Excavation 94	247
Test Excavation 95	249
Section 11 Waterfront Geographic Zone (T-096 to T-115)	251
11.1 Overall Location	251
11.2 Geography, Geology, and Land Forms.....	251
11.3 Modern Land Use and Built Environment.....	252
11.4 GPR Sediment Summary	252
Test Excavation 96	255
Test Excavation 97	257
Test Excavation 98	259
Test Excavation 99	261
Test Excavation 100	263
Test Excavation 101	265
Test Excavation 102	267
Test Excavation 103	269
Test Excavation 104	271
Test Excavation 104A.....	273
Test Excavation 105	275
Test Excavation 106	277
Test Excavation 107	279
Test Excavation 108	281
Test Excavation 109	283
Test Excavation 110	285
Test Excavation 111	287
Test Excavation 111A.....	289
Test Excavation 112	291
Test Excavation 113	293
Test Excavation 114	295
Test Excavation 115	297
Section 12 References Cited	299

List of Figures

Figure 1. GPR suitability map (source: National Resource Conservation Service) showing the location of the study area.....	3
Figure 2. Photograph showing the GPR grid and antenna	5
Figure 3. Transect alignment and spacing.....	5
Figure 4. Guide for GPR Slice Map Interpretation	9
Figure 5. Guide for GPR Profile Interpretation.....	12
Figure 6. Examples of GPR Signal Textures Representing HHCTCP Section 4 Naturally Deposited Sediments	14
Figure 7. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile for Test Excavation 096	20
Figure 8. Visual comparison of excavated plan views and GPR slice maps for Test Excavation 096	21
Figure 9. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile for Test Excavation 141	23
Figure 10. Visual comparison of excavated plan views and GPR slice maps for Test Excavation 141	24
Figure 11. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile for Test Excavation 142	26
Figure 12. Visual comparison of excavated plan views and GPR slice maps for Test Excavation 142	27
Figure 13. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile for Test Excavation 150	29
Figure 14. Visual comparison of excavated plan views and GPR slice maps for Test Excavation 150	30
Figure 15. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile for Test Excavation 170	32
Figure 16. GPR slice maps for Test Excavation 170	33
Figure 17. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile for Test Excavation 226C	36
Figure 18. Visual comparison of excavated plan views and GPR slice maps for Test Excavation 226C	37
Figure 19. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile for Test Excavation 227A	39
Figure 20. Visual comparison of excavated plan views and GPR slice maps for Test Excavation 227	40
Figure 21. Aerial photograph (source: U.S. Geological Survey Orthoimagery 2005) with overlay of the Soil Survey of Hawai‘i (Foote et al. 1972) showing sediment types within and in the vicinity of the Waterfront Zone.....	43
Figure 22. Examples of GPR signal textures representing Zone 1 sediments	44
Figure 23. Slice maps of T-001 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	45
Figure 24. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-001.....	46
Figure 25. Slice maps of T-002 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	47

Figure 26. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-002.....	48
Figure 27. Slice maps of T-004 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	49
Figure 28. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-004.....	50
Figure 29. Slice maps of T-005 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	51
Figure 30. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-005.....	52
Figure 31. Slice maps of T-006 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	53
Figure 32. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-006.....	54
Figure 33. Slice maps of T-007 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	55
Figure 34. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-007.....	56
Figure 35. Slice maps of T-008 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	57
Figure 36. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-008.....	58
Figure 37. Slice maps of T-009 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	59
Figure 38. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-009.....	60
Figure 39. Slice maps of T-010 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	61
Figure 40. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-010.....	62
Figure 41. Slice maps of T-011 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	63
Figure 42. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-011.....	64
Figure 43. Slice maps of T-012 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	65
Figure 44. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-012.....	66
Figure 45. Slice maps of T-013 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	67
Figure 46. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-013.....	68
Figure 47. Slice maps of T-014 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	69
Figure 48. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-014.....	70
Figure 49. Slice maps of T-015 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	71
Figure 50. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-15.....	72
Figure 51. Slice maps of T-016 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	73
Figure 52. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-016.....	74
Figure 53. Slice maps of T-017 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	75
Figure 54. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-017.....	76
Figure 55. Slice maps of T-018 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	77
Figure 56. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-018.....	78
Figure 57. Slice maps of T-019 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	79
Figure 58. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-019.....	80
Figure 59. Slice maps of T-020 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	81
Figure 60. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-020.....	82
Figure 61. Slice maps of T-020A at 25 cm depth intervals.....	83
Figure 62. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-020A.....	84
Figure 63. Aerial photograph (source: U.S. Geological Survey Orthoimagery 2005) with overlay of the Soil Survey of Hawai‘i (Foote et al. 1972) showing sediment types within and in the vicinity of the East Kalihi Zone	88
Figure 64. Examples of GPR signal textures representing Zone 2 sediments	89
Figure 65. Slice maps of T-021 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	90
Figure 66. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-021.....	91
Figure 67. Slice maps of T-022 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	92
Figure 68. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-022.....	93

Figure 69. Slice maps of T-023 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	94
Figure 70. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-023.....	95
Figure 71. Slice maps of T-024 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	96
Figure 72. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-024.....	97
Figure 73. Slice maps of T-025 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	98
Figure 74. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-025.....	99
Figure 75. Slice maps of T-026 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	100
Figure 76. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-026.....	101
Figure 77. Slice maps of T-027 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	102
Figure 78. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-027.....	103
Figure 79. Slice maps of T-028 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	104
Figure 80. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-028.....	105
Figure 81. Slice maps of T-029 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	106
Figure 82. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-029.....	107
Figure 83. Slice maps of T-030 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	108
Figure 84. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-030.....	109
Figure 85. Slice maps of T-031 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	110
Figure 86. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-31.....	111
Figure 87. Slice maps of T-032 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	112
Figure 88. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-032.....	113
Figure 89. Slice maps of T-033 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	114
Figure 90. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-033.....	115
Figure 91. Slice maps of T-034 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	116
Figure 92. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-034.....	117
Figure 93. Slice maps of T-035 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	118
Figure 94. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-035.....	119
Figure 95. Slice maps of T-036 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	120
Figure 96. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-036.....	121
Figure 97. Slice maps of T-037 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	122
Figure 98. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-037.....	123
Figure 99. Slice maps of T-038 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	124
Figure 100. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-038.....	125
Figure 101. Slice maps of T-039 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	126
Figure 102. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-039.....	127
Figure 103. Slice maps of T-040 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	128
Figure 104. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-040.....	129
Figure 105. Slice maps of T-041 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	130
Figure 106. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-041.....	131
Figure 107. Slice maps of T-042 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	132
Figure 108. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-042.....	133
Figure 109. Slice maps of T-043 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	134
Figure 110. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-043.....	135
Figure 111. Slice maps of T-044 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	136
Figure 112. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-044.....	137
Figure 113. Slice maps of T-049 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	138

Figure 114. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-045.....	139
Figure 115. Slice maps of T-046 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	140
Figure 116. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-046.....	141
Figure 117. Slice maps of T-047 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	142
Figure 118. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-047.....	143
Figure 119. Aerial photograph (source: U.S. Geological Survey Orthoimagery 2005) with overlay of the Soil Survey of Hawai‘i (Foote et al. 1972) showing sediment types within and in the vicinity of the West Kapālama Zone	146
Figure 120. Examples of GPR signal textures representing Zone 3 sediments	147
Figure 121. Slice maps of T-048 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	148
Figure 122. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-048.....	149
Figure 123. Slice maps of T-049 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	150
Figure 124. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-049.....	151
Figure 125. Slice maps of T-050 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	152
Figure 126. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-050.....	153
Figure 127. Slice maps of T-051 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	154
Figure 128. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-051.....	155
Figure 129. Slice maps of T-052 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	156
Figure 130. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-052.....	157
Figure 131. Slice maps of T-053 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	158
Figure 132. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-053.....	159
Figure 133. Aerial photograph (source: U.S. Geological Survey Orthoimagery 2005) with overlay of the Soil Survey of Hawai‘i (Foote et al. 1972) showing sediment types within and in the vicinity of the East Kapālama Zone	162
Figure 134. Examples of GPR signal textures representing Zone 4 sediments (T-054 to T-065).....	163
Figure 135. Examples of GPR signal textures representing Zone 4 Sediments (T-067 to T-084).....	164
Figure 136. Slice maps of T-054 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	165
Figure 137. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-054.....	166
Figure 138. Slice maps of T-056 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	167
Figure 139. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-056.....	168
Figure 140. Slice maps of T-057 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	169
Figure 141. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-057.....	170
Figure 142. Slice maps of T-058 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	171
Figure 143. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-058.....	172
Figure 144. Slice maps of T-059 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	173
Figure 145. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-059.....	174
Figure 146. Slice maps of T-060 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	175
Figure 147. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-060.....	176
Figure 148. Slice maps of T-061 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	177
Figure 149. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-061.....	178
Figure 150. Slice maps of T-062 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	179
Figure 151. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-062.....	180
Figure 152. Slice maps of T-063 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	181

Figure 153. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-063.....	182
Figure 154. Slice maps of T-064 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	183
Figure 155. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-064.....	184
Figure 156. Slice maps of T-065 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	185
Figure 157. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-065.....	186
Figure 158. Slice maps of T-066 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	187
Figure 159. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-066.....	188
Figure 160. Slice maps of T-067 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	189
Figure 161. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-067.....	190
Figure 162. Slice maps of T-068 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	191
Figure 163. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-068.....	192
Figure 164. Slice maps of T-069 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	193
Figure 165. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-069.....	194
Figure 166. Slice maps of T-070 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	195
Figure 167. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-070.....	196
Figure 168. Slice maps of T-071 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	197
Figure 169. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-071.....	198
Figure 170. Slice maps of T-072 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	199
Figure 171. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-072.....	200
Figure 172. Slice maps of T-073 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	201
Figure 173. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-073.....	202
Figure 174. Slice maps of T-074 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	203
Figure 175. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-074.....	204
Figure 176. Slice maps of T-075 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	205
Figure 177. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-075.....	206
Figure 178. Slice maps of T-076 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	207
Figure 179. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-076.....	208
Figure 180. Slice maps of T-077 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	209
Figure 181. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-077.....	210
Figure 182. Slice maps of T-078 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	211
Figure 183. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-078.....	212
Figure 184. Slice maps of T-079 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	213
Figure 185. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-079.....	214
Figure 186. Slice maps of T-080 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	215
Figure 187. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-080.....	216
Figure 188. Slice maps of T-081 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	217
Figure 189. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-081.....	218
Figure 190. Slice maps of T-082 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	219
Figure 191. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-082.....	220
Figure 192. Slice maps of T-083 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	221
Figure 193. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-083.....	222
Figure 194. Slice maps of T-084 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	223
Figure 195. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-084.....	224
Figure 196. Aerial photograph (source: U.S.G.S. Orthoimagery 2005) with overlay of the Soil Survey of Hawai‘i (Foote et al. 1972) showing sediment types within and	

in the vicinity of the Iwilei Zone AIS test excavations (T-086 through T-095) along the transit corridor and at the Iwilei Transit Station.....	227
Figure 197. Examples of GPR signal textures representing Zone 5 sediments	228
Figure 198. Slice maps of T-085 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	229
Figure 199. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-085.....	230
Figure 200. Slice maps of T-086 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	231
Figure 201. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-086.....	232
Figure 202. Slice maps of T-087 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	233
Figure 203. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-087.....	234
Figure 204. Slice maps of T-088 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	235
Figure 205. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-088.....	236
Figure 206. Slice maps of T-089 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	237
Figure 207. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-089.....	238
Figure 208. Slice maps of T-090 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	239
Figure 209. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-090.....	240
Figure 210. Slice maps of T-091 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	241
Figure 211. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-091.....	242
Figure 212. Slice maps of T-092 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	243
Figure 213. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-092.....	244
Figure 214. Slice maps of T-093 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	245
Figure 215. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-093.....	246
Figure 216. Slice maps of T-094 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	247
Figure 217. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-094.....	248
Figure 218. Slice maps of T-095 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	249
Figure 219. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-095.....	250
Figure 220. Aerial photograph (source: U.S. Geological Survey Orthoimagery 2005) with overlay of the Soil Survey of Hawai‘i (Foote et al. 1972) showing sediment types within and in the vicinity of the Waterfront Zone.....	253
Figure 221. Examples of GPR signal textures representing Zone 6 sediments	254
Figure 222. Slice maps of T-096 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	255
Figure 223. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-096.....	256
Figure 224. Slice maps of T-097 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	257
Figure 225. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-097.....	258
Figure 226. Slice maps of T-098 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	259
Figure 227. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-098.....	260
Figure 228. Slice maps of T-099 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	261
Figure 229. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-099.....	262
Figure 230. Slice maps of T-100 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	263
Figure 231. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-100.....	264
Figure 232. Slice maps of T-101 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	265
Figure 233. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-101.....	266
Figure 234. Slice maps of T-102 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	267
Figure 235. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-102.....	268
Figure 236. Slice maps of T-103 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	269
Figure 237. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-103.....	270

Figure 238. Slice maps of T-104 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	271
Figure 239. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-104.....	272
Figure 240. Slice maps of T-104A at 25 cm depth intervals.....	273
Figure 241. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-104A.....	274
Figure 242. Slice maps of T-105 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	275
Figure 243. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-105.....	276
Figure 244. Slice maps of T-106 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	277
Figure 245. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-106.....	278
Figure 246. Slice maps of T-107 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	279
Figure 247. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-107.....	280
Figure 248. Slice maps of T-108 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	281
Figure 249. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-108.....	282
Figure 250. Slice maps of T-109 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	283
Figure 251. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-109.....	284
Figure 252. Slice maps of T-110 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	285
Figure 253. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-110.....	286
Figure 254. Slice maps of T-111 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	287
Figure 255. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-111.....	288
Figure 256. Slice maps of T-111A at 25 cm depth intervals.....	289
Figure 257. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-111A.....	290
Figure 258. Slice maps of T-112 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	291
Figure 259. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-112.....	292
Figure 260. Slice maps of T-113 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	293
Figure 261. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-113.....	294
Figure 262. Slice maps of T-114 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	295
Figure 263. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-114.....	296
Figure 264. Slice maps of T-115 at 25 cm depth intervals.....	297
Figure 265. Visual comparison of excavated profile and GPR signal profile of T-115.....	298

List of Tables

Table 1. GPR Data Collection Param	6
Table 2. Naturally deposited sediments within the range of clean GPR signal return for Zone 1	42
Table 3. Naturally deposited sediments within the range of clean GPR signal return for Zone 2	87
Table 4. Naturally deposited sediments within the range of clean GPR signal return for Zone 3	145

Section 1 Background

The use of Ground-Penetrating Radar (GPR) for this study was specifically dictated in the HHCTCP Programmatic Agreement. The purpose of this investigation was to evaluate the efficacy of GPR surveys within the context of urban Honolulu, to test this method's ability to map stratigraphy, as well as locate subsurface cultural deposits, including human burials. The subsurface mapping capabilities and depth information that can be acquired by GPR make it a promising geophysical technique for imaging stratigraphy and subsurface features of interest, especially human burials. As there are a number of archaeologically sensitive areas within the HHCTCP project corridor it is important to assess whether or not sensitive cultural deposits (i.e., human burials) can be located and mapped in a non-invasive way. Additionally, this study seeks to improve the effectiveness of GPR data analysis through “ground truthing” (comparison of GPR results with actual excavation results).

Previous GPR surveys conducted in nearby locations have demonstrated the potential of GPR to map stratigraphy and subsurface features, though overall depth penetration and feature resolution remain a concern (O’Hare et al. 2009; Pammer et al. 2009). A preliminary GPR investigation for the HHCTCP project conducted by TAG Research by Sturm, Inc. sought to evaluate and test which antenna frequencies, collection param, and processing procedures would be the most effective for potentially mapping and identifying the cultural features of interest (Sturm 2010). Sturm (2010) concluded that “GPR mapping has use and potential for imaging buried features in this urban environment” (Sturm 2010: 34). Additionally, Sturm recommends that a 400 MHz antenna be utilized to conduct the HHCTCP GPR survey, as it “provided the best overall quality data, allowing high resolution mapping of target features of interest (including burials) to a depth of approximately 1 to 1.5 m” (Sturm 2010: 4).

This report also intends to offer a reference for future archaeological work within or near the study area that could benefit from the use of GPR analysis to investigate stratigraphy or potentially identify cultural layers or features. The work is presented in a way that allows the reader to directly compare the GPR results to “ground-truthed” excavation results. The report provides a detailed description of field methods, survey methodology, data collection param, post-processing, and an interpretation and summary section. The size and scope of this investigation provides a rare opportunity to interpret an intermittent GPR cross-section through one of Hawai‘i’s more developed urban environments.